

UTC Work from Home Guidelines

I. Objective

To provide standards for regular, temporary or student employees in an active pay status seeking a Work from Home arrangement voluntarily or when required by the University.

UT [Policy HR0480 – Work Schedules](#) establishes standards for work schedules which accommodate both the business needs of the University and, as feasible, employee requests. Alternate work schedules, such as telecommuting, may be developed and approved by administration in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources. Telecommuting is defined as a work arrangement approved in advance in which an employee works at least part of their work hours from an alternative location. On an as-needed basis, the University may approve Work from Home as a temporary alternative workplace arrangement other than a formal telecommuting agreement.

II. Definitions and Eligibility

Work from Home arrangements provide employees the opportunity to work at a place other than their regularly assigned on-campus work location, such as their residence or an alternate location approved by administration. Employees who utilize this Work from Home arrangement will be assigned their residence (or alternate approved location) as their official work station for the days they work away from the office. The employee's permanent work station will remain as designated by the University, as employees may be required to report to their on-campus work station location as requested by management for meetings, continuity of critical services, etc.

Employees must obtain advance approval from their immediate supervisor, along with the review and approval of the Vice Chancellor of the administrative division before working from home. The option to work from home is at the discretion of administration, and consideration of such should include collaboration with all appropriate levels of administration and the Office of Human Resources. Although not exhaustive, the following reasons may result in consideration of granting a temporary Work from Home arrangement:

- Need to Care for Others (e.g., children, spouse, elders, etc.)
(Please contact the Office of Human Resources to determine if Family Medical Leave procedures should be initiated)
- Medical Reasons
(Please contact the Office of Human Resources to determine if Family Medical Leave procedures should be initiated)
- Inclement Weather
- University Continuity Planning in Response to Emergency Situations

Employees may make a request for individual consideration of a Work from Home arrangement, or University administration may execute a Work from Home arrangement for employees as part of emergency response procedures.

Approval will not be granted where physical presence is required to perform the essential functions of the employee's job, where working from home is not in the University's best interest, or for those identified as essential personnel during administrative closings or other emergency response situations.

A. Determining Eligibility for a Work from Home Arrangement

It is advised to consider the following questions before approving a Work from Home arrangement:

- Can the employee fulfill their essential job duties off campus for a temporary period of time without a significant impact to continuation of services or quality of services?
- Does working from home create any security or data privacy concerns?
- Will collaboration with the employee's team be impeded or become difficult?
- Does the employee have the necessary equipment or software installed at home? If not currently, can it be reasonably provided?
- Is it in the University's best interest to allow the employee to work from home?

B. Identifying Essential-Services Personnel

Essential services may be identified on a case-by-case basis when considering the current operational and service delivery needs of the campus in response to varying emergency situations (e.g., inclement weather, administrative closings, reduced services, etc.). In each scenario, essential services may be identified as those that are mission-critical to maintaining campus operations and service expectations as defined by University administration.

Each division Vice Chancellor must collaborate with their unit administrators to identify essential-services personnel to (1) work on campus, (2) serve in an on-call capacity to return to campus as needed, or (3) maintain a Work from Home arrangement during an administrative closing or emergency response situation to provide continuation of critical services. Consistent with prior campus instances of planned or unplanned administrative closings or emergency response situations, examples of essential-services personnel units may include but are not limited to:

- Chief Executive and Operating Administrators (e.g. Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, Deans, Assistant/Associate Vice Chancellors, etc.)
- Public Safety
- Safety & Risk Management
- Facilities Planning & Management: Administration, Powerplant Operations, Custodian, Maintenance, etc.
- Auxiliary Services / Dining Services
- Human Resources: Administration, Payroll, etc.
- Budget and Finance / Procurement & Contract Services
- Housing and Residence Life: Administration, Housing Operations, Maintenance, etc.
- Communications and Marketing / WUTC Radio Station
- Dean of Students: Student Outreach and Support, Student Conduct, Disability Resource Center, etc.
- Counseling Center
- Information Technology: Administration, Client Services, Enterprise Applications, Information Security, Infrastructure Services, etc.
- Academic Affairs: Administration, Instructional Support, etc.
- Athletics: Administration

The following factors may be considered in determining essential-services personnel:

- Duties are to provide immediate and continued support of essential operations
- Duties are required to be performed on location
- It would be impractical to convert duties to another position/personnel for that duty to be performed without interruption

Employees should be notified if they are identified as essential personnel and of expectations outlined for response during an administrative closing or other emergency response situation. Essential personnel may be denied the opportunity to establish a Work from Home arrangement. Additional guidance for establishing performance expectations for a Work from Home arrangement can be found in the following sections of this document and [Appendix A](#).

III. Work Schedules / Time Keeping

Pursuant to [HR0480 -Work Schedules](#), the supervisor is responsible for setting the work schedule and may alter it based upon the needs of the department. An employee's Work from Home work schedule should be consistent with the core work day of their campus department unless a variation is approved by the supervisor, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include the need for extended hours.

Employees are expected to maintain their assigned percent of effort (e.g., 100%, full-time = 40 hours per week) recorded in the official IRIS personnel system while performing work in a temporary Work from Home arrangement. Time not reported as worked during a Work from Home arrangement should be recorded as leave, either annual or sick leave, when necessary and approved by the employee's supervisor, pursuant to [UT Policy HR0380 – Sick Leave](#) and [HR0305 – Annual Leave](#).

All departments and exempt / non-exempt employees must adhere to time keeping/payroll requirements outlined in [UT Policy FI0930 – Payroll](#) during periods of Work at Home arrangements. Requirements for reporting time, entering time in IRIS, and time approvals in IRIS by established bi-weekly and monthly payroll deadlines continue as-is during Work at Home arrangements. All departments must ensure continued compliance.

All overtime compensation policies remain in place during Work from Home arrangements, which reiterates the importance of accurate time reporting requirements of employees working from a remote location to their respective supervisors. Pursuant to [UT Policy HR0445 - Overtime Compensation](#), any work by a non-exempt student employee or staff employee (regular or temporary) that exceeds 40 hours in a workweek is considered "overtime." Supervisors may require employees to work overtime. An employee who wishes to work overtime voluntarily must first receive approval from an appropriate supervisor. No employee is authorized to work overtime without first receiving either instruction or approval from an appropriate supervisor. When an eligible employee works approved overtime, the University will provide compensatory time in accordance with *UT Policy HR0445*, unless campus or department practice provides for the payment of monetary compensation. Temporary employees are not eligible for compensatory time. Holidays and administrative closings are included in hours worked; all other leave with pay is excluded from overtime calculations.

An employee may be required to use annual or sick leave for time out of the office if a Work from Home arrangement is not sought and approved in advance or if work is not performed as requested by supervision during a Work from Home arrangement.

IV. Facilities

A. Home Office Space

Employees working from home should have a designated work space or work station that will provide appropriate working conditions. Requirements may vary, depending on the nature of the work and the equipment needed to perform the work.

B. Home Utility Expenses

Incremental home utility costs associated with working from home will not be paid or reimbursed by the University.

C. Phone Allowances

Requests for a phone allowance will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis for employees performing a significant amount of work duties from their personal smart telephone device while in a Work from Home arrangement.

D. Internet Accessibility

Requests for internet accessibility assistance will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis for employees without current internet access when a significant amount of work duties will require access to the internet. Requests should be submitted for review and approval as outlined in [FI0730 – Telephones and Other Communication Devices](#).

E. Miscellaneous Expenses

Costs associated with the copying of work-related materials, facsimile charges, express mail, etc., may be reimbursed by the University, if employees received prior approval to incur said expenses. Reasonable efforts should be made to minimize such expenses by the employee's use of University resources while performing work duties. Reimbursement requests should be followed in accordance with established work-related expense reimbursement procedures.

V. Equipment

The University may provide the employee all or a portion of equipment necessary to perform duties at a remote work site, subject to availability and budgetary restrictions.

A. Computers, University-Owned Equipment, etc.

The University may provide equipment (including desktops, laptops, tablets, printers, etc.) and materials (office supplies, etc.) needed by employees to effectively perform their duties from a remote location. Current on-campus equipment may be relocated as needed with approval of Work from Home arrangements. Employees may be authorized to use their own equipment, with the approval of supervision. Employees are responsible for protecting University-owned equipment from negligent use, theft, damage, and unauthorized use.

B. Maintenance

University-owned equipment used to perform work from a remote location will be maintained, serviced, and repaired by the University. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the University will not assume responsibility for the cost of equipment, repair, or service.

C. Assessing Equipment Needs and Resources

Assessment of all equipment, resources and training needed to perform work from a remote location will be necessary. Please refer to the [Working from Home or a Remote Location](#) webpage for helpful information related to access to commonly used IT resources.

An inventory record of all University-owned equipment provided to an employee in a Work from Home arrangement must be established, signed and maintained by the supervisor. All equipment provided or approved for removal to a remote work site must be returned at the conclusion of the Work from Home arrangement, a date sooner as established by the supervisor/departmental procedures, or at the time of the employee's separation from the University.

VI. IT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) / IT Security

All employees must read and adhere to [UT Policy IT0110 – Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources](#) when performing work on campus or at a remote site.

IT Security information, training, and contact information can be found at <https://www.utc.edu/information-technology/security/index.php>.

VII. Records Management

Employees are required to comply with the following guidelines on using records or duplicating records when working at remote locations.

- Any work documents, including official records removed from on-campus work spaces by employees performing work at a remote location, remains the property of the University. Additionally, any official record that is generated by employees working from a remote location becomes the property of the University.
- Employees should get written approval from their supervisor prior to taking official records/sensitive information to a remote work site. This approval should be valid only for a defined period of time. All official records/sensitive information that are moved from an on-campus location to a remote work site should be documented in accordance with established departmental procedures or requirements (e.g., sign-out sheets, etc.) as determined by supervisor. All records/sensitive information approved for removal to a remote work site must be returned at the conclusion of the Work from Home arrangement, a date sooner as established by the supervisor/departmental procedures, or at the time of the employee's separation from the University.
- When any University record is used by an employee at a remote site, care must be taken to ensure that information is not disclosed to anyone except those who are authorized to access the information in order to perform their duties. Appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards should be taken to ensure the security and confidentiality of these records.

VIII. Liability Issues

Questions related to claims for personal property damage or loss or personal injury arising out of an employee's performance of official duties from a remote location should be directed to the UTC Office of Human Resources and the employee's supervisor.

Working from home mirrors office workers' compensation liability and standard protocol. If a work injury is life-threatening, or results in serious bodily injury, immediately call 911. For non-urgent injuries, the first step is to report the injury to your supervisor and to the workers' compensation company, Corvel. A Corvel provider can be reached 24/7 at 1-866-245-8588. For more information about workers' compensation, next steps, and forms, visit the [UTC's Workers' Compensation site](#) managed by the Office of Human Resources.

IX. Inclement Weather / Equipment Issues

In instances of inclement weather, employees must continue to work to the extent possible. However, if an employee is unable to work due to issues beyond his/her control (e.g., power outage, equipment failure, etc.), the employee must report the issue to the supervisor immediately or as soon as practical. Depending on the amount of time remaining in the work day, the supervisor may either allow the employee to take leave (if requested) or request that the employee report to their on-campus work office/location, if practical.

X. Establishing Work Performance Expectations

When establishing a temporary Work from Home arrangement, supervisors should detail in writing the work performance expectations during the identified period. Expectations to outline may include, but are not limited to:

- preferred frequency and mode of communication
- work product delivery deadlines
- expectations for initiating or joining meetings remotely
- responsiveness requirements
- daily/weekly work activity reports, etc.

An employee may be required to use annual or sick leave for time out of the office if a Work from Home arrangement is not sought and approved in advance or if work is not performed as requested by supervision during a Work from Home arrangement. If an employee is unable to return to their assigned on-campus work location to perform work upon termination of a Work from Home arrangement, then they may be required to record leave, be established in a leave without pay status, etc., as appropriate.

A Work from Home arrangement may be discontinued at any time at the discretion of administration if it is determined that the established work performance expectations or work schedule expectations are not being upheld by the employee working from a remote site.

A Work from Home agreement form is provided in [Appendix A](#) for reference.

Appendix A:
Alternate Work Schedule: Temporary Work from Home Agreement Form

The purpose of this form is to document approval and expectations associated with a temporary Work from Home arrangement approved in advance by the employee's immediate supervisor, along with the review and approval of the Vice Chancellor of the administrative division, before working from home. Work from Home agreements will be established in accordance with the UTC Work from Home Guidelines.

Employee: _____ Personnel Number: _____

Position Title: _____ Supervisor's Name: _____

Department: _____ Division: _____

Classification Status: ____ Exempt, ____ Non-Exempt

Work from Home Arrangement Requested by: ____ Employee ____ Supervisor

Reason for Work from Home Arrangement Request:

____ Need to Care for Others (e.g., children, spouse, elders, etc.) (*Please contact the Office of Human Resources to determine if Family Medical Leave procedures should be initiated*)

____ Medical Reasons (*Please contact the Office of Human Resources to determine if Family Medical Leave procedures should be initiated*)

____ Inclement Weather

____ University Continuity Planning in Response to Emergency Situations

____ Other. Please briefly describe: _____

Justification for Work from Home Arrangement Request (Brief Description):

Timeline

Proposed Start Date: _____ Proposed End Date: _____

Comments:

Considerations for Essential-Services Personnel:

If a Work from Home Arrangement is being established for an essential-services personnel member, then please identify the following work schedule(s) that may be required of the employee for university continuity planning in response to emergency situations (choose all that may apply):

____ Work on Campus

____ Serve in an On-call Capacity to return to campus as needed

____ Work from Home

Work from Home Arrangement Details and Performance Expectations

The following sections may be used to guide administrators in reviewing the appropriateness of a Work from Home arrangement and establishing expectations for employees when performing work from a remote location.

Proposed work Schedule – Outline work days/hours required of the Work from Home schedule

Duties to be performed – List of duties if different from full portfolio of work outlined in position description

Equipment required to perform duties remotely - Include serial numbers if applicable of University-owned equipment that will be removed from campus for work from a remote location

Communication Expectations – List expectations for how the employee will communicate regularly with their supervisor, team members, customers, etc. to include expectations for attending meetings remotely or those that may require in-person attendance

Other Expectations/Considerations Established:

